

**DRAFT FOR BOARD AND  
COMMISSION REVIEW****October 21, 2003****SUBJECT: Outreach Task Force Recommendations in Response to  
RTC #02-455, *Explore Options to Improve Community Outreach*****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In response to RTC#02-455, *Explore Options to Improve Community Outreach*, Council directed an interdepartmental and community Outreach Task Force to review and, if needed, develop City-wide outreach guidelines in certain target areas:

- Noticing for private development/public projects
- Reports to Council postings
- City meetings
- Special mailing list use
- Public participation
- City services and events

This Report to Council details the Task Force's recommendations on outreach guidelines for each target area.

**Fiscal Impact**

The estimated annual costs per Task Force recommendation are considered after discussion of each recommendation below. Most of the Task Force recommendations require no additional funding and can be absorbed into current operating budgets. See *Summary of Task Force Recommendations* (Attachment M) for a one-page summary of Task Force recommendations including fiscal impact.

**Public Contact**

Public contact was made through community member representation on the Outreach Task Force. The Task Force included four Board and Commission members who also represented the Sunnyvale community.

Public contact was also made through the posting of the Council agenda on the City's official notice bulletin board, posting of the agenda and report on the City's

web page, publication of the Council agenda in *the San Jose Mercury News*, and the availability of the report in the Library and the City Clerk's Office.

A draft RTC was routed to Boards and Commissions for comment at their discretion.

## **Recommendations**

Staff recommends Alternative 2.

## **Attachments**

- A) Current Noticing Practices for Private Development Projects
- B) May 8, 2003 Memo from Diana O'Dell (CDD) to the Members of the Outreach Task Force regarding the Cost Impact of Task Force Recommendations
- C) Public Noticing Evaluation Criteria for Private Development and Public Projects
- D) Current Noticing Practices for Public Projects
- E) Procedures for Reports to Council Postings
- F) Procedures for Noticing City Council Meetings and Board and Commission Meetings
- G) Procedures for Noticing City—Sponsored Community Outreach Meetings
- H) Task Force Recommendations for City—Sponsored Community Outreach Meetings
- I) Task Force Recommendations for Special Mailing List Use
- J) Task Force Recommendations for City Services Outreach
- K) Task Force Recommendations for City Events Outreach
- L) City of Sunnyvale Outreach Tools
- M) Summary of Task Force Recommendations

## **BACKGROUND**

RTC #02-455, *Explore Options to Improve Community Outreach* (November 26, 2002), assessed the City's existing communications and outreach practices in the following areas: noticing for private development/public projects, outreach for Council decision making input, and services and events outreach.

In response to RTC# 02-455, Council directed staff to work with an interdepartmental/community task force to review, update or develop City-wide outreach guidelines in certain targeted areas listed below. In March 2003, the Outreach Task Force was assembled composed of four board and commission members (appointed by the Mayor) and eight staff members (appointed by department directors) representing Office of the City Manager (OCM), Department of Public Safety (DPS), Community Development Department (CDD), Department of Public Works (DPW), Library and Department of Parks and

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Recreation (DPR).<sup>1</sup> The Task Force, chaired by Coryn Campbell (OCM), met six times between March 27 and June 26, 2003.

The Outreach Task Force's objective was to review and, if needed, develop City-wide community outreach guidelines to ensure adequate communication to, and opportunity for input by, Sunnyvale community members. The recommendations developed by the Task Force focus on increasing awareness of City issues and activities and providing community members affected by a proposed action the opportunity to influence the upcoming decision.

This Report to Council details the Task Force's recommendations on outreach guidelines for the following nine targeted areas.

**The Targeted Areas:**

- Noticing for private development
- Noticing for public projects
- Reports to Council postings
- City Council and Board and Commission meetings
- City—sponsored community outreach meetings
- Public participation
- Special mailing list use
- City services
- City events

Note: These recommendations do not comprehensively address the City's branding/quality assurance policies of outreach materials. For this purpose, the Communications Office is currently developing a communications style guide that is tentatively scheduled to be completed in December 2003. The Communications Office will ensure that Sunnyvale's style guide will be consistent with Council action from this Report.

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<sup>1</sup> Pam Anderson      Board of Library Trustees  
 Peter Bassett      Community Outreach Coordinator, OCM  
 Dane Beezley      Chair, Arts Commission  
 Coryn Campbell      Neighborhood & Community Services Manager, OCM  
 Dean Chu      Planning Commission  
 Dieckmann Cogill      Transportation Planner, DPW  
 Sharon Kornhaus      Supervising Librarian, Library-  
 Thom Mayer      Vice Chair, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee  
 Cathy Merrill      Assistant to the Director, DPR  
 Diana O'Dell      Associate Planner, CDD  
 John Pilger      Communications Officer, OCM  
 Kirk Sanfilippo      Captain II, DPS

**EXISTING POLICY*****Planning and Management Element, Community Participation Sub-Element***

Goal 7.2A **Community Education**: Achieve a community in which citizens and businesses are informed about local issues and City programs and services.

Action Statement 7.2A.1b: Provide community organizations and networks with and encourage distribution of information regarding City events, programs and services.

Policy 7.2A.2 **Information Distribution**: Publish and distribute information regarding City programs and services, City Council actions, and policy issues.

Action Statement 7.2A.2c: Evaluate periodically City public information materials, activities and plans, using surveys, focus groups, or other means to assess effectiveness, minimize duplication, maximize cost-effectiveness of information distribution, and respond to community needs.

Policy 7.2A.4 **Appropriate Technology**: Identify communications media and telecommunications technology which are appropriate and cost-effective to provide information to and access for the community.

Goal 7.2D **Service Delivery**: Assure that all citizens have reasonable access to City information, services, programs, policy makers and staff.

Action Statement 7.2D.2b: Continue a high level of community awareness of City services and programs.

Policy 7.2D.3 **Access**: Provide reasonable and fair citizen access to information and services within budgeted resources.

Council Policy 7.2.12(A.1): **Internet Information Policy**: Use the Internet to maintain and enhance the City's information resources and services provided to Sunnyvale citizens.

Council Policy 7.2.12(A.1.a): **Internet Information Policy**: Ensure that appropriate printed public information currently available to Sunnyvale citizens will remain free of charge in electronic form.

Council Policy 7.2.12(A.1.b): **Internet Information Policy**: Ensure that essential information is available on demand via the Internet for the public interest.

Council Policy 7.2.12(A.1.c): **Internet Information Policy**: Support easy public Internet access to public information to the widest extent possible.

Council Policy 7.2.12(C.1): **Internet Information Policy:** Use the Internet as a tool to deliver City services.

Council Policy 7.2.12(C.1.a): **Internet Information Policy:** Use the Internet to make Sunnyvale citizens more aware of community resources in the areas of public safety, emergency preparedness, leisure activities, learning resources, and other community services.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Criteria for Outreach Guidelines**

In developing outreach guidelines, the Outreach Task Force identified several criteria. According to the Task Force, outreach guidelines should:

- Provide community members with reasonable, timely and cost effective notification and access to City information;
- Provide guidance to City staff in making outreach decisions that meet Council expectations;
- Allow City departments flexibility to create outreach plans that fit unique program needs;
- Be appropriate to very limited program budgets;
- Require only limited professional expertise for implementation;
- Address Sunnyvale's unique outreach challenges:
  - limited local newspaper distribution by Sunnyvale Sun,
  - significant limited English speaking and ESL population,
  - multi-cultural community members,
  - economically diverse community members,
  - large geographic area (24 square miles),
  - significant day-time population in addition to resident population;
- Ensure adequate timeliness for public input;
- Align with Communications Office program objectives, the Sunnyvale General Plan, Sunnyvale administrative policies and legal requirements.

### **Recommendations on Targeted Areas**

#### **I. Noticing for Private Development**

The Task Force reviewed and approved the Community Development Department's (CDD) *Current Noticing Practices for Private Development Projects* (Attachment A) with the recommendations below:

**Recommendation I.A:** For all single-story major remodels (an addition of 50% square footage or greater), notice should be given to adjacent homeowners.

**Recommendation I.B:** For all second-story additions, notice should be given to owners and single-family and duplex tenants up to three properties away (adjacent to adjacent to adjacent).

*Estimated Annual Cost of I.A and I.B:* \$10,433.41. For further information, see May 8, 2003 Memo from Diana O'Dell (CDD) to the Members of the Outreach Task Force regarding the *Cost Impacts of Task Force Recommendations* (Attachment B). This memo was distributed to Task Force members after the Task Force approved Recommendations I.A and I.B.

**Recommendation I.C:** Any item that goes to public hearing, regardless of how it gets there, should be noticed to a minimum of adjacent properties.

*Estimated Annual Cost:* CDD staff estimates that this recommendation would impact no more than 10 projects per year (primarily tree removal permits). Since the estimated cost per notice is \$2.16 and adjacent noticing typically includes eight homes, the estimated annual cost of this recommendation is \$172.80. This cost can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

**Recommendation I.D:** As detailed in *Public Noticing Evaluation Criteria for Private Development and Public Projects* (Attachment C), CDD staff should evaluate the following criteria on a project-by-project basis to determine the appropriate level of noticing for private development:

- The location and size of the project;
- The extent to which community members may be adversely affected by the project;
- Whether the project will be likely perceived as controversial;
- Whether broad-based community support is needed to go forward with the project;
- The costs and benefits of additional noticing.

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Nominal staff time can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

**Recommendation I.E:** Develop a 2004 study issue to explore expanded noticing for development of buildings higher than 45 feet. This study issue is intended to address the recent, and perhaps continued, new development of tall buildings in areas that affect residential zones.

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Associated costs of this recommendation will be identified during the 2003/04 Council study issue process.

**DRAFT****II. Noticing for Public Projects**

The Task Force reviewed and approved the Department of Public Works' (DPW) *Current Noticing Practices for Public Projects* (Attachment D) with the recommendations below:

**Recommendation II.A:** As detailed in *Public Noticing Evaluation Criteria for Private Development and Public Projects* (Attachment C), DPW staff should evaluate the following criteria on a project-by-project basis to determine the appropriate level of noticing for public projects:

- The location and size of the project;
- The extent to which community members may be adversely affected by the project;
- Whether the project will be likely perceived as controversial;
- Whether broad-based community support is needed to go forward with the project;
- The costs and benefits of additional noticing.

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Nominal staff time can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

**Recommendation II.B:** For major roadway projects, staff should make reasonable efforts to notice users of affected roadways in addition to noticing nearby residents. Such noticing could include “Construction Update” news releases, newspaper ads, notification of major area employers, posting of brief project updates on the City's web site, and notification of local, county, and regional transportation organizations and agencies.

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Staff estimates that there are approximately seven major roadway projects per year. Expanded noticing for these projects would require an estimated 10 additional staff hours per project. Staff believes this expense can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

Additional funding is required to place ads in the local newspaper noticing major roadway projects. The cost of a legal ad in *The Mercury News* is \$86.84 per column inch per day. The total cost to advertise seven roadway projects per year is therefore \$607.88. This amount can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

**III. RTC Postings**

The Outreach Task Force reviewed and approved *Procedures for Reports to Council Postings* (Attachment E) with the recommendations below:<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> These recommendations reflect the outreach aspects of Administrative Policy Chapter II, Article II, Report to Council Format and Content.

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**Recommendation III.A:** For lengthy RTCs that are posted online, attachments should be listed, and linked, in the Executive Summary.<sup>3</sup>

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Nominal staff time can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

**Recommendation III.B:** Attachments to RTCs should be in a form which is clearly legible. In the instance where a document cannot be cost-effectively formatted in an acceptable manner, it should not be included or linked to the RTC document.

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Nominal staff time can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

**Recommendation III.C:** RTCs and other documents presented on the City's web site should be in a form which is clearly legible and of a standardized format. The Communications Officer shall work with Information Technology staff to establish appropriate standards for use Citywide by staff for documents scheduled for inclusion on the City's web site.

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Nominal staff time can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

**Recommendation III.D:** RTC titles should reflect the core issues of the RTC in a way that is meaningful to the public.

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Nominal staff time can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

#### **IV. City Council Meetings and Board and Commission Meetings**

The Outreach Task Force reviewed and approved *Procedures for Noticing City Council and Board and Commission Meetings* (Attachment F).<sup>4</sup> The Task Force made one recommendation:

**Recommendation IV.A:** Special Council meetings should be "called out" on the home page of the City's web site to notify the public that a special meeting has been called.

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Nominal staff time can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

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<sup>3</sup>This recommendation already exists in Administrative Policy Chapter II, Article II, with which staff should be complying.

<sup>4</sup> These recommendations reflect the outreach aspects of Administrative Policy Chapter II, Article I, Council Agendas.



## **V. City—Sponsored Community Outreach Meetings**

The Outreach Task Force reviewed and approved *Procedures for Noticing City—Sponsored Community Outreach Meetings* (Attachment G). The Task Force made one recommendation:

**Recommendation V.A:** When planning a community outreach meeting on a particular City issue, City staff should consider developing a community outreach plan to ensure that community meetings are accessible to interested community members, publicized in a timely way, and within budgeted resources. As detailed in *Outreach Guidelines for City—Sponsored Community Meetings* (Attachment H), the outreach plan should address the following criteria:

- What is the purpose of the meeting?
- Who is the target audience?
- Will the meeting topic likely be perceived as controversial?
- Cost/benefit analysis: approximately how much will outreach cost? What will be the benefits?
- Which outreach tools will best reach the target audience? (See *City of Sunnyvale Outreach Tools*, Attachment L)

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Nominal staff time can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

## **VI. Public Participation Guidelines**

Public participation guidelines serve as a planning tool for City governments in developing strategies and goals regarding community member access and input to City services, information, and decision making. The Task Force reviewed both the City's Community Participation Sub-Element of the Sunnyvale General Plan, and the December 2002, RTC #02-508, *Options for Gathering Community Feedback for the Connected Communities/Seamless Services Initiative*.

In reviewing the Sub-Element, the Task Force made two recommendations:

**Recommendation VI.A:** The Community Participation Sub-Element should be updated within the next two years and it should include a discussion of multi-cultural/multilingual outreach and the utilization of modern technology including the Internet.

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Associated costs of this recommendation will be identified during the 2003/04 Council study issue process.

**Recommendation VI.B:** Regarding RTC #02-508, *Options for Gathering Community Feedback for the Connected Communities/Seamless Services Initiative*, the Task Force strongly recommends that the City move forward with Council direction including implementation of a comment line, informal

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community survey, and community workshops. The Task Force recommends that these activities be completed within the next twelve months.

*Estimated Annual Cost:* None. \$8,800 from fiscal uncertainties is already budgeted to implement Council's direction this fiscal year.

**VII. Special Mailing List Use**

Sunnyvale does not currently have written guidelines for special mailing list use. The Outreach Task Force developed recommendations for special mailing lists outlined below.

*Definition of a Special Mailing List*

A mailing list that is maintained by an individual City department, and that is made up of a subset of Sunnyvale community members who are interested in receiving information about certain City issues, events or services. It excludes the "Parcel Database" used by the Community Development Department for public noticing, and the "Utilities Mailing List". Examples include: *Friends of Sunnyvale Parks and Recreation Mailing List*, *NCS "CONNECT" Database*, *Library Program and Event Mailing List* and *Community Center Mailing List*.

*Issues Surrounding the City's Special Mailing Lists*

In the June 2000 Communications Audit, it was recommended that the City's databases be "checked for accuracy and timeliness" and that the City examine the processes surrounding its mailing lists. One of the findings of the subsequent November 2002 RTC, *Explore Options to Improve Community Communications and Outreach*, was that the City's special mailing lists are not systematically maintained.

There are numerous special mailing lists that exist throughout the City and there are limited resources for maintaining them. Many community members are found on more than one list and each list is updated and maintained separately. This duplication of information means that City staff must change a community members' information in more than one place when there is an update to be made. The Information Technology Department (ITD) understands the need to develop a central dataset of community member information against which all community member addresses can be verified.

*Impact of Proposed "Ebot" System*

With the launch of the City's new website structure, ITD has proposed implementing a new email notification system ("Ebot"). Users of this new system will register to receive automatic email notifications on information newly posted to the City's website. For example, a resident can, by subject matter, register to receive email notifications of newly posted City Council agendas. As a result of

this notification, an email is sent to the user whenever subsequent agendas are posted. While the Ebot system will reduce or eliminate subject matter email lists, it will not replace department mailing lists.

### *Recommendations for Special Mailing List Use*

As detailed in *Outreach Task Force Recommendations for Special Mailing List Use* (Attachment H), the Task Force made the following recommendations regarding the City's use of special mailing lists:

**Recommendation VII.A:** Post a comprehensive list of all of the City's special mailing lists on "Jasmine," the City's intranet website.

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Nominal staff time can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

**Recommendation VII.B:** Explore the development of a consolidated database for appropriate special mailing lists.

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Estimated OCM staff time to explore a consolidated database of appropriate special mailing lists is approximately 50 hours. Estimated ITD staff time to support OCM efforts is approximately 25 hours. Staff believes that this recommendation can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

**Recommendation VII.C:** Until a consolidated database is available, the Task Force approved guidelines for special mailing list use noted in *Task Force Recommendations for Special Mailing List Use* (Attachment I).

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Nominal staff time can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

## **VIII. City Services Outreach**

The quality and quantity of the City's services outreach materials varies significantly by program, division, and department.

The Task Force made several recommendations to ensure that community members are adequately informed about City services. These recommendations are summarized below and detailed in *Recommendations for City Services Outreach* (Attachment J). These recommendations apply only to those services that community members can choose at their own discretion (the recommendations would not apply, for example, to the City's street paving service).

**Recommendation VIII.A:** City staff are encouraged to utilize service outreach plans as a tool to ensure that discretionary City services are accessible to all

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interested community members within budgeted resources. Service outreach plans include the following:

- Service description
- Audience/stakeholders
- Outreach tools (See *City of Sunnyvale Outreach Tools*, Attachment L)
- Cost/Benefit Analysis
- Alignment: Are the community outreach tools used to publicize the service in alignment with disseminated City-wide communications guidelines (in the process of being developed)?

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Nominal staff time can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

**Recommendation VIII.B:** To ensure consistent style, appearance and quality (not to reduce creativity or distinctiveness), service outreach materials (flyers, news releases, paid advertising) should be consistent with the standards developed and disseminated by the Communications Office (to be developed by the end of the 2003 calendar year).

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Nominal staff time can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

**Recommendation VIII.C:** Discretionary City services should be posted on the City's external website. Each posting should include a brief description of the service as well as the contact information (phone number and email address).

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Nominal staff time can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

**Recommendation VIII.D:** Informational brochures and handouts developed by outside organizations, and distributed by the City to the community about City services, should contain the contact information of the City division that is providing the service.

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Nominal staff time can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

## **IX. City Events Outreach**

City events are often cited by residents as an important component to their sense of community. Events are publicized in various ways throughout the City. Examples of City events include Hands on the Arts, 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration, State of the City, Health and Safety Fair, National Night Out and Public Safety Pancake Breakfast(s). Nonrecurring City events include such gatherings as the Bianchi Barn Dedication and the Senior Center Grand Opening.

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The Task Force made several recommendations to ensure that community members are adequately informed about City events. These recommendations are summarized below and detailed in *Recommendations for City Events Outreach* (Attachment K). These recommendations apply to City-wide gatherings or activities hosted by the City of Sunnyvale and open to all Sunnyvale community members.

**Recommendation IX.A:** City staff are encouraged to utilize event outreach plans as a tool to adequately inform community members about City events within budgeted resources. Event outreach plans include the following:

- Event description
- Audience/stakeholders
- Outreach tools (See *City of Sunnyvale Outreach Tools*, Attachment L)
- Cost/Benefit Analysis
- Alignment
- Evaluation

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Nominal staff time can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

**Recommendation IX.B:** To ensure consistent style, appearance and quality (not to reduce creativity or distinctiveness), events outreach materials (flyers, news release, paid advertising) should be consistent with the standards developed and disseminated by the Communication's Office (to be developed by the end of the 2003 calendar year).

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Nominal staff time can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

**Recommendation IX.C:** All City events should be posted on the City's external web site. For planning purposes, City events should also be posted as tentative dates on Jasmine's City-Wide Events Calendar. Each posting should include a brief description of the event and the contact information, including phone number and email address, of the City division responsible for the event.

*Estimated Annual Cost:* Nominal staff time can be absorbed into the current operating budget.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The estimated annual costs associated with each Outreach Task Force recommendation is included in the above discussion section. See *Summary of Task Force Recommendations* (Attachment M) for a one-page summary of Task Force recommendations including fiscal impact.

**PUBLIC CONTACT**

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Public contact was made through the community member representatives on the Outreach Task Force. The Task Force included four Board and Commission members who represented the interests of the Sunnyvale community.

Public contact was also made through the posting of the Council agenda on the City's official notice bulletin board, posting of the agenda and report on the City's web page, publication of the Council agenda in *the San Jose Mercury News*, and the availability of the report in the Library and the City Clerk's Office.

A draft RTC was routed to Boards and Commissions for comment at their discretion.

**ALTERNATIVES**

1. Council directs implementation of all Outreach Task Force recommendations.
2. Council directs staff to implement all Outreach Task Force recommendations except I.A and I.B due to budget constraints.
3. Council directs staff to implement any combination of Outreach Task Force recommendations.
4. Council directs staff to take no action regarding the Outreach Task Force's recommendations.
5. Other actions as determined by Council.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends Alternative 2.

Prepared by:

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Reviewed by:

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Approved by:

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City Manager

**Attachments**

- A) Current Noticing Practices for Private Development Projects
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